

Board expects that public statements presented at its meetings will deal only with potential chemical, environmental, and other exposures. In general, each individual or group making an oral presentation will be limited to a total time of five minutes. Written comments may be mailed to Board members if at least 20 copies are received in the Special Oversight Board Staff Office no later than noon EDT July 2, 1999. Comments received during July 3–9 will be provided to Board members upon their arrival in Washington. Written comments received after July 9 will be mailed to Board members after the adjournment of the July 1999 meeting.

Dated: June 9, 1999.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy, Office of Naval Research

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Continued Operation of the Sound Source Installed by the Acoustic Thermometry of Ocean Climate (ATOC) Project North of Kauai

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Office of Naval Research (ONR) is announcing its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to continue operation of the sound source installed by the ATOC Project north of Kauai.

DATES: Public scoping meetings will be held in: (1) Hanalei, Kauai on June 29, 1999 at 7 PM at the Wai'oli Hui'ia Church, Mission Hall, 5–5363 Kuhio Highway; (2) Lihue, Kauai on June 30, 1999 at 7 PM at the Kauai Community College Dining Room, 3–1901 Kaumualii Highway; and (3) Honolulu, Hawaii on July 1, 1999 at 7 PM at the Hawaii Imin Intl. Conference Center, East-West Center, 2nd Floor, Pacific Room, 1777 East-West Road. Written comments regarding the scope of this environmental document must be submitted by 08/15/99.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests for additional information should be addressed to ATTN: Office of Naval Research, c/o Kathleen J. Vigness, (703) 465–8404, Marine Acoustics, Inc., 901 N. Stuart St., Suite 708, Arlington, VA 22203.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Kauai ATOC Feasibility Study began in October 1997, and included a Marine Mammal Research Program (MMRP) for which a Scientific Research Permit was obtained. The sound source installed by the ATOC Project is located approximately 14.7 km (8 nm) north of Kauai at 22° 20.94 N, 159° 34.18 W at a depth of 807 m (2648 ft). During the ATOC Project, a team of marine mammal researchers utilized transmissions of the sound source to conduct simultaneous observations of marine mammal behavior. The acoustic objectives of the ATOC Feasibility Study were to determine the precision with which acoustic methods could be used to measure large-scale changes in ocean temperature and heat content, thereby refining climate models and gaining a better understanding of the potential for global warming. The objectives of the MMRP were to determine the potential effects of the sound source on marine animals.

The results of the ATOC Project demonstrate that acoustic travel times can be measured much more accurately than expected. These travel times can then be used to estimate range- and depth-averaged temperatures with a precision of about 0.006°C at ranges of 3,000 to 5,000 km. The marine mammal research indicates that transmissions by the sound source do not affect the abundance, distribution or singing behavior of humpback whales in the vicinity of the sound source, and that there were no biologically significant short-term effects observed in conjunction with the transmissions. The MMRP found that the distance and time between successive whale surfacings increased slightly with increasing sound levels.

With these positive results, the Office of Naval Research will prepare an EIS to continue operation of the sound source installed by the ATOC Project. The sound source would remain at its present location, and transmissions would continue with the same signal parameters and approximately the same transmission schedule. The current schedule maintains six 20-minute transmissions (one every four hours), every fourth day, with each transmission preceded by a 5-minute ramp-up period, representing an average duty cycle of 2%. With the possible exception of equipment failures or short duration testing, this schedule would continue for a period of five years. The signals transmitted by the source have a center frequency of 75 Hz and a bandwidth of approximately 35 Hz (i.e., sound transmissions are in the frequency band of 57.5–92.5 Hz).

Approximately 260 watts of acoustic power are radiated during transmission. At 1 m (3.28 ft) from the source, the sound intensity is about 195 dB referenced to the intensity of a signal with a sound pressure level of 1 microPascal (on a "water standard" basis). These signal parameters and source level have been found to provide adequate, but not excessive, signal-to-noise ratios at the receiver ranges of interest.

The EIS will address the potential effects of the transmissions on the marine environment, including potential auditory, behavioral, and physiological effects on marine mammals and other marine creatures. Alternatives will be studied, including the no action alternative.

Dated: June 8, 1999.

Jeffrey Simmen,

Ocean Acoustics Program, Office of Naval Research.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Acting Leader, Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer invites comments on the submission for OMB review as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before July 15, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Danny Werfel, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW, Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 or should be electronically mailed to the internet address DWERFEL@OMB.EOP.GOV. Requests for copies of the proposed information collection requests should be addressed to Joseph Schubart, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5624, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202–4651, or should be electronically mailed to the internet address Joe_Schubart@ed.gov or should be faxed to 202–708–9346.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Joseph Schubart (202) 708–9266.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information